

## **CHARING & DISTRICT LOCAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

[www.charinghistory.co.uk](http://www.charinghistory.co.uk)

 @CharingHistory 

### **CDLHS 'As and When' newsletter June Fete 2023 edition**

First a big 'Thank You' to all those who have contacted us and contributed to make the next two newsletters possible. I've separated the material into two parts; this one is called the Fete edition as its main focus is the CDLHS stall at the fete, the following one (out soon) will be 'Coronation Stories'

Thank you Kirsten, Celia, Colin Burdick and Terry Lister for your articles for this edition. Also to Keith for his role in 'persuading'.

#### **The '1840 Charing Parish Survey Map'**

In 1813 a thorough survey was made of Charing Parish to make an extremely detailed map, showing plots buildings and fields. The map was revised and used 27 years later, with an accompanying list, to fulfil the requirements of the first Tithe Act of Parliament passed in 1836. Plots were numbered on the map and listed in a book, known as an 'apportionment book', giving names of owners, occupiers, acreage and value. Together these are a treasure trove for researchers.

CDLHS have been given an original 1840 map and apportionment book, which was believed to be in regular use by the Norwood family of Charing solicitors, the last of whom, Charles Norwood, retired in 1963. The committee wanted Charing residents to be able to see it, and the fete seemed the perfect opportunity.

A copy of the map and transcripts of the apportionment book will be at the fete on Saturday for people to look for their houses or see what was there in 1840 and who owned the fields and who rented them. It makes fascinating reading.

The next few pages give an account of what needed to be done to make it possible.

CDLHS will be at  
Charing fete on  
Saturday 24th  
June, at Clewards



## Find your field at the CDLHS



Come and see our copy of a very  
detailed 1840 map of the Charing  
area.

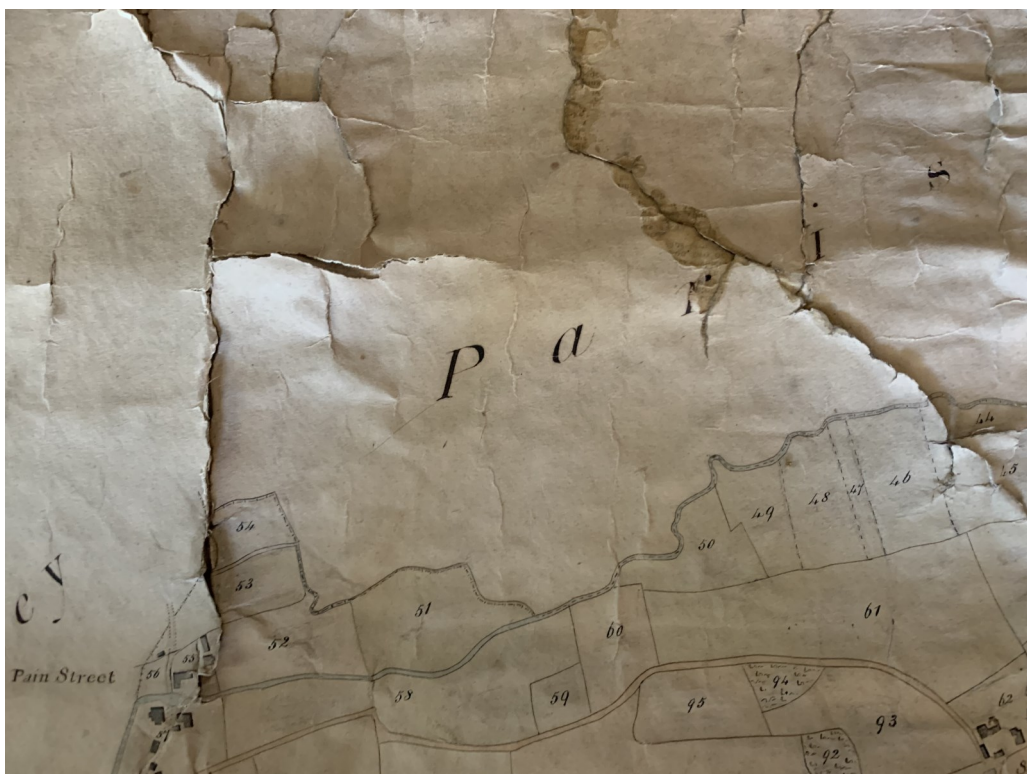
Did your house exist in 1840?

Can you find it on our map,  
or perhaps the field it was in?

## The Main Damage

the extent was only revealed  
when the huge map was carefully unrolled

*Photos: K.A. Oram*



## Unrolling The Map and Finding a Problem

*By Kirsten Moon*



*(Photos: Kirsten Moon)*

I didn't get to see the original map until Keith brought it to the barn for Steve to take some pictures. Carefully rolled in its box it is clearly being treated carefully now but it's had a hard life.

It is made up of a number of sheets all attached to a linen backing and is enormous, around 10' (3m) long by 6' (2m) wide.

The only way we could hang it for photographing was to have Keith and Kevin hold it over the balcony in the barn and Francesca and Sylvia hold the bottom end to stop it curling. Even then as you can see from the part picture below it isn't smooth. This made taking really good photos of the original really difficult quite apart from worrying that more handling would damage it further.

The main damage is to the top end. The story is that the map was so large the owner, solicitor Mr Charles Norwood fixed it to a wall at a height that he could see it, and that meant the bottom trailed on the floor. People, therefore, ended up walking on it or standing things on it.

Now hanging it with the top at the bottom also seems odd. All the words and numbers are then upside down. However, for some reason when the map was created, they put North at the bottom, almost as though someone was looking at the parish from the top of the downs. We haven't been able to find the reason why they did this. Certainly by 1813 when the original map was created it was normal to have North at the top.

With the original being so vulnerable and already damaged, a way of making a usable copy was needed. Celia came up with the idea of tracing it. Finding the right paper to do this was tricky, but 75cm wide architectural tracing paper was our answer; using that the whole map could be covered by two strips.

## Tracing of the 1813/40 Plan of Charing Parish

*by Celia Jennings*

The original plan is almost 10' high, damaged and unwieldy, but intrinsically extremely interesting, so I cudgelled my brains to come up with a way of making it available on the Fête day to as many residents of Charing as possible. Tracing seemed the answer but, lacking any artistic talent myself, I turned to my friend Hilary White.



*Hilary White painstakingly tracing in the Church Barn on Day 2*

Armed with the original map, large rolls of tracing paper, pens, rulers and clamps we set off for the Church Barn one icy April morning. The barn's flat wooden floor was an ideal place for the map, though not for our knees, which began to ache fairly early on in the proceedings. We worked there all day, using two rolls of paper placed side by side, taking turns to

copy the left or the right side, to steal each other's cushions, talking all the while to take our minds off the pain and the cold.

At the end of day one we had completed slightly under half of the tracing so we met once again the following day. This time we were slightly better garbed and be-cushioned and by the end of the day we had finished tracing the outlines. I took a panoramic photographic view of the original map, which proved crucial for the next stage.

On day three we repaired to my somewhat warmer house where there is a table large enough to set out one of the sheets of tracing paper. Hilary produced a set of chalks and advised on the colours we should use. Consulting the photos on my phone I was able to mark the fields with the appropriate colour (green for pasture, pink for arable, blue for rivers, brown for roads) which Hilary then rubbed in. Finally, we checked the field numbers, adding some and correcting others, as parts of the original plan are faded, damaged by a previous owner's wet feet (he kept it on the floor), and it was not always easy to see all the digits through the tracing paper.

## **The Need to Digitise— a setback, but not for long ...**

*by Kirsten Moon*

With the tracings made, the CDLHS committee needed to have it in digital form so that others could access it and use the map. The tracings themselves are a work of art and we didn't want them damaged. One option was to have them photographed using the Archival -Digital Capture set up at Smarden Heritage Centre. Here much of the CDLHS archive is photographed to create a protective and usable digital record of what the society has been so kindly donated by people.

However, photographing the rolls didn't prove as easy as we had hoped. A lot of the individual photos of the tracing were fine, but stitching them together to show the whole thing didn't work as there was slight distortion at the edges of each photo. It was very disappointing. The archive photosystem is great for documents, and indeed photographing the Attribution Book, which holds the key to the map, worked out really well, but another approach needed to be found for the map.

Fortunately, 'The Print Junction', a printer in Ashford, has a plan scanner and they were able to swiftly and accurately scan both rolls and create pdf files. Now the files are available to view and work with the Attribution Book.

For the fete, so everyone can see the map and have the fun of finding out what was on the site of their own house in 1840, we needed prints. Again, Print Junction was able to colour-print one of each of the two tracing scans on sheets of A0. Trimmed down and fastened together we have a large print for viewing at the Fete on 24 June. This print is about [2/5<sup>th</sup>s OR 40% OR just under half) the size of the original. We also had colour prints of the centre of Charing and Charing Heath made at A2 size so that people can study them up close and identify where they live.

### **Apportionment Book**

As well as the map the CDLHS was gifted an Apportionment Book. Both the map and the book were used as part of a process in the 1840s to convert the old tithe payments to a new rent charge. The book itself is hard-backed and about [7" (18cm) x10" (25cm) with pre-printed pro forma pages. As this conversion was going on across the country no doubt there was a good market for printers to provide this sort of book. Each page has columns for the owners of the land, the occupier, the plot number (as on the map) what the plot is being used for, and the size of each plot.

Unlike the map, the book is in amazing condition when you consider it's nearly 200 years old. The writing is still pretty clear too but on going through it you notice that names are not always spelt the same way and on occasions, errors have been corrected. Indeed, the book says at the end that the data is "As Corrected by Jas Drewry, Octr 2nd 1840".

## Apportionment Book *contd.*

By Kirsten Moon

Overall, the book has over 1200 lines of data. The first 1000 odd lines (51 pages) listing the details of the land by plot number. The second part summarises the data, listing it alphabetically by owner.

For preservation purposes, as said above all this book was photographed at Smarden and sample copies of the pages will be on display at the fete. Additionally, the book has been transcribed in spreadsheet form so that as an electronic document it can be used for searching for specific information. One project may be to compare who was living at the places listed with the information about families in Charing set out in the 1841 and 1851 censuses.

For the fete, we have produced two full sets of the transcripts. This means people can find where they live on the map and then using the transcript work out who owned and occupied the site in 1840, and what it was being used for. We are illustrating this with examples of where committee members currently live. Some of us would have had a home to go to in 1840 but for most our current homes would then have been a draughty field. So come along and see what your home used to be.

For anyone interested in helping us explore what else the map and book (and other related documents) can tell us about Charing, just speak to anyone at the CDLHS stand at the fete, contact us by email [Hon.Secretary@charinghistory.co.uk](mailto:Hon.Secretary@charinghistory.co.uk) or ask at our next meeting in September."

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### Notes

*Originally the idea was that each member of the committee would transcribe pages from the Apportionment Book and check another's copy. Between us, the whole book would be transcribed. In fact, Kirsten did it all herself, and Kevin, her husband, checked it all.*

*After the disappointing results at Smarden, Steve accurately fitted the two halves of the printed traced map together perfectly, onto a sheet of hardboard to create a 1/3 original size map.*

VY

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The map is now in a readable form for the fete, and even more importantly, digitised for the future.

Celia Jennings, Hilary White, Kirsten Moon, Keith Oram, Steve and Sylvia Beck and Kate McIver researched and worked painstakingly to achieve this.

VY

## My Grandad Used to Drive Engines Like This One.....



My Grandad on my Mother's side was Harry Hercules Smith, son of Fortunatus Smith (yes, really.....). He worked for the Southern Region as an engine driver, on fast and express trains between London Victoria and the South Coast.

One class of locomotive he drove was the Merchant Navy ('MN'), as the 30 locomotives were all named after Merchant Navy Shipping Lines. They were introduced in 1941, 3 years before he retired in 1944.

A similar class was introduced from 1946, and known as West Country & Battle of Britain ('WC & BB') as they were named after West Country towns etc, along with aircraft, squadrons & leading figures associated with the Battle of Britain.

Following the end of steam engines being used by British Railways in 1968, a number were saved from the scrapyards, and restored to working order, including a number of 'WC', 'BB' & MN' types. One Battle of Britain engine recently visited the Kent & East Sussex Railway for 6 weeks.

Dorothy and I were able to visit the railway and see the locomotive (no. 34072 '257 Squadron'), and when I explained the family connection, I was invited to climb on to the footplate. It was a shame grandad hadn't driven that particular engine, but I was very pleased to sit where he would have done, in 'his' locomotives.

It used to be said that many schoolboys always wanted to be train drivers when they 'grew up' - maybe that's how it started for my grandad. But let's finish by saying that with names of 'Harry Hercules' and 'Fortunatus', I get the feeling that my Smith family forebears saw themselves 'above their station'.....



## The DofE Awards



“Any young person can do their DofE – regardless of ability, gender, background or location. Achieving an Award isn’t a competition or about being first. It’s all about setting personal challenges and pushing personal boundaries.

Through a DofE programme young people have fun, make friends, improve their self-esteem and build confidence. They gain essential skills and attributes for work and life such as resilience, problem-solving, team-working, communication and drive”

*From What Is The DofE? (Youth Without Limits)*

One of the wonderful things about scouting is the active support of young people working towards their Duke of Edinburgh awards. There is a dedicated section of explorers in Ashford and we also support those who choose to do it with school.



*Harry Bellamy: Gold*

The gold award is a major achievement and can be completed up to the age of 25 so many who achieve this are adults. There is a presentation evening in Ashford and those achieving gold are invited to Buckingham Palace where the Duke welcomes them. He has taken over from his father with enthusiasm.

At the Ashford presentation there were 20 young people of whom four had links with Charing and another two were unable to attend. We are very proud of them all:

Duncan, explorer scout and young leader. Bronze award

Toby, explorer scout. Silver award

Saskia Caddell, Cub Scout leader. Gold award

Mark Boughton, Cub Scout leader. Gold award

Harry Bellamy, former group member. Gold award

Eugenie Dodds, former group member. Gold award

*Terry Lister – GSL, Charing*

## Heather & Terry Invitation to Buckingham Palace Garden Party7



*Buckingham Palace Wikimedia*

*Credit: Misterweiss*

Heather and I were delighted to be invited to the Coronation Garden Party at Buckingham Palace. I'm told that it was for my services to medicine and scouting. I worked in Charing for well over 30 years and tried at all times to provide family medicine whilst embracing inevitable change. This included the advent of mobile phones and computers and the change from 24 hour care to the use of deputising services.

We built the huge new surgery, which seemed much too big for our needs. A few years later we added the extension! Part of this was to accommodate a state of the art pharmacy. The old dispensing chemist in the High Street had closed many years ago. I was also very much concerned with training new GPs in Charing and coordinating all of the training in Ashford.

I've been involved in scouting for over 43 years man and boy. As well as helping at Charing I have been very involved in training new leaders, with roles in the Ashford District and the County.

We thought we'd arrived at the Palace in very good time, but there was already a huge queue. We queued to get in through one of the two open gates, although the queue moved quite fast we were able to admire the hats and outfits, especially those in national dress. These ranged from Scottish kilts to Nigerian robes, Indian saris and Arab burnouses and many people in a variety of uniforms. I wore morning dress (with a scouting tie). Heather looked fantastic in an embroidered coat. We were entertained by two bands and the yeoman of guard did several



*Buckingham Palace Gate Wikimedia*

*Credit: Amanda Slater*

March pasts.



The royals present were the Prince & Princess of Wales, the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh, Princess Ann & the Duke of Gloucester. Luckily the rain held off until the very end as we were leaving after the final band played God save the King.

*Terry & Heather Lister*